

STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 1 through 18, and 30 were pending in this application.

Claims 19 through 29 were previously withdrawn from consideration.

Claims 1 through 3, 5 through 9, 12 through 18, and 30 stand rejected by the Examiner.

Claims 4, 10 and 11 have been objected to.

Claims 1 through 30 have been cancelled.

Claims 31 through 33 have been added.

Claims 31 through 33 are now pending in this application.

REMARKS

In view of the foregoing amendments and the remarks which follow, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the subject application.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant notes with appreciation that the Examiner would allow Claims 4, 10 and 11 if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. As suggested by the Examiner, and under the conditions further explained below, Applicant has rewritten, without prejudice, Claims 4, 10 and 11 as new Claims 31, 32 and 33, in independent form. In addition, Applicant has cancelled, without prejudice, Claims 1 through 30. It is believed that Claims 31 through 33 reflect certain novel aspects of Applicant's invention, and are patentably distinct from the references of record.

As stated above, Applicant has rewritten claims 9, 10 and 11 as new Claims 31, 32 and 33, and has cancelled Claims 1 through 30. Applicant has made these amendments and has cancelled these claims without prejudice and without conceding to any of the Examiner's

characterizations regarding the patentability of such claims, while reserving Applicant's right to further prosecute to the fullest possible scope any and all such claims in separate, related applications now pending or hereinafter filed. In addition, and to the extent necessary, Applicant traverses all claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103, including any such rejections based upon Official Notice taken by the Examiner.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests favorable consideration of Claims 31 through 33, and the early issuance of a Notice of Allowance of all such claims.

Telephonic Interview

Applicant respectfully requests the courtesy of a telephonic interview with the Examiner upon receipt of this Response in order to expedite the prosecution of this application.

Request for Extension Under 37 CFR §1.136(a)

In connection with this Amendment, Applicant is concurrently submitting herewith a Request for a three month extension of time pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a).

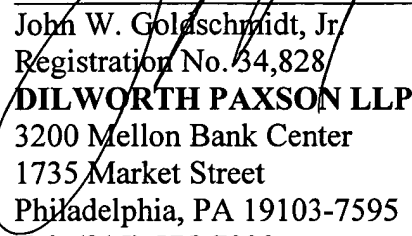
CONCLUSION

Wherefore, Applicant believes that all outstanding grounds raised by the Examiner have been addressed and requests reconsideration of the instant application. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the present case is in condition for allowance, the early notification of which is earnestly solicited.

Serial No.: 10/817,343
Paper Dated September 22, 2008
Reply to Official Action

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiencies or credit any overpayment related to this submission to Deposit Account Number 50-0979.

Respectfully submitted,



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